

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1582

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: PS ON AZOREAN STATUTE AND ELECTIONS

REF: LISBON 1530 (STG 101225Z MAR 76)

SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO JAIME GAMA, SOCIALIST SPOKESMAN ON AZOREAN MATTERS, PS IS WILLING TO ACCEPT STATUTE OF AUTONOMY FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES ON AUTONOMY BY CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY. PS POSITION PAVES WAY FOR SOLUTION WHICH WOULD REMOVE STATUTE AS CONTENTIOUS ISSUE IN ISLANDS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN MAR 10 COVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, SOCIALIST DEPUTY JAIME
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GAMA MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- AZOREAN STATUTE OF AUTONOMY: THE DECISION BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) TO NAME A COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE STATUTE WAS A TEMPORIZING ACTION (REFTEL). IT WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE THE CONSTITUTEN ASSEMBLY TIME TO ACT ON THE GENERAL CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES WHICH WILL GOVERN AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES AND MADEIRA. ONCE THESE PRINCIPLES ARE APPROVED, THE SOCIALISTS WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT IMMEDIATE PROMULGATION OF THE STATUTE BY THE RC AS A CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. IT WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT THE STATUTE, LIKE ANY OTHER PREVIOUSLY-ENACTED CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC TO BE ELECTED IN APRIL. GAMA ADDED THAT PS RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOME OF THE ECONOMIC PROVISIONS OF THE STATUTE WOULD NOT STAND IN WAY OF APPROVAL.

-- COSTA GOMES-TITO MEETING: THE MED-MARCH MEETING BETWEEN COSTA GOMES AND PRESIDENT TITO OF YUGOSLAVIA HAS BEEN SWITCHED FROM THE AZORES TO FARO, CAPITAL OF THE ALGARVE. THE CHANGE WAS MADE TO AVOID ANY POSSIBILITY OF EMBARRASSMENT DURING THE DISCUSSIONS.

-- PS ELECTION LISTS: IN PUTTING TOGETHER ITS LISTS FOR THE APRIL ELECTIONS, THE SOCIALISTS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO RID ITS ASSEMBLY DELEGATION OF TROUBLEMAKERS. OBSTRUCTIONISTS, MOSTLY FROM THE LEFT WING OF THE PARTY -- GAMA SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED LUIS BARRETO FROM LEIRIA -- WERE DROPPED AS CANDIDATES. GAMA SAID HE ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS AS A RESULT; SOME OF THOSE DROPPED MIGHT BOLT THE PARTY.

-- LINKS WITH DISSIDENTS: THE PS HAS BEEN WILLING TO INCLUDE SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (EX-00\$, NOW MSD) ON ITS ELECTION LISTS AS INDEPENDENTS. BUT THE PPD DISSIDENTS BARGAINED AS A BLOC AND HELD OUT FOR A FORMAL MSD-PS SLATE. THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. THE PS, HOWEVER, DOES NOT RULE OUT COOPERATION IN SOME FORM WITH INDIVIDUAL MSD MEMBERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN. THE SOCIALIST INTERVENTION GROUP (EX-MES, NOW GIS) WAS ANOTHER STORY. THE PS HAD LITTLE TO GAIN FROM ANY ALLIANCE WITH THIS GROUP, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHICH GAMA SAID WAS CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MELO ANTUNES. GAMA NOTED THAT BOTH HE AND MANUEL ALEGRE HAD THREATENED NOT TO RUN IF GIS MEMBERS WERE INCLUDED OF PS LISTS.

-- UNION ELECTIONS: PS CONSIDERED NARROW DEFEAT OF ITS SLATE IN BALLOTING ON UNION STATURE FOR COUNTER-ZONE PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS A SERIOUS SETBACK. BUT THE SOCIALISTS

WILL HAVE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO REVERSE THE DECISION WHEN ELECTIONS FOR UNION OFFICERS ARE HELD. THE PS WILL REDOUBLE ITS EFFORTS TO ENSURE VICTORY. (ON MARCH 9 A GROUP OF WORKERS WHO SUPPORTED THE PS-BACKED STATUTE, FORMALLY CHALLENGED RESULT OF BALLOTING.)

LZ2. COMMENT: WILLINGNESS OF THE SOCIALISTS TO GO ALONG WITH APPROVAL OF AZOREAN AUTONOMY STATUTE FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF GENERAL CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES WILL GO LONG WAY TO DEFUSING THE ISSUE ON THE ISLANDS. GERMANO DOMINGOS, PPD DEPUTY FROM AZORES TOLD EMBOFF MAR 10 THAT ALTHOUGH AZOREANS WILL NOT LIKE RC DECISION TO DEFER APPROVAL OF STATUTE, THEY WILL BE WILLING TO WAIT UNTIL GENERAL PRINCIPLES ARE APPROVED.
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